1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

JEWELLERY.

301 The Khasis, as a people, may be said to be fond of jewellery.
326 The women are specially partial to gold and coral bead necklaces. The beads are round and large, and are usually unornamented with filigree or other work. The coral is imported from
[439] Calcutta. The gold bead is not solid, but a hollow sphere filled with lac. These necklaces are worn by men as well as women, especially on gala occasions. Some of the necklaces are comparatively valuable, e.g. that in the possession of the Mylliem Siem family. The gold and coral beads are prepared locally by Khasi as well as by foreign goldsmiths. The latter derive considerable profits from the trade. The Assam Census Report of 1901 shows 133 goldsmiths in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district, but does not distinguish between Khasis and foreigners. There are Khasi goldsmiths to be found in Mawkhar, Cherrapunji, Mawlai, and other villages. Sylheti goldsmiths are, however, more largely employed than Khasi in Mawsynram and certain other places on the south side of the hills. In Mr. Henniker's monograph on "gold and silver wares of Assam" it is stated that the goldsmiths of Karimganj in Sylhet make specially for Khasis certain articles of jewellery, such as men's and women's earrings, &c. An article of jewellery which is believed to be peculiar to the Khasis is the silver or gold crown. This crown is worn by the young women at
301 dances, such as the annual Nongkrem dance. An illustration of one will be seen by referring to the plate. These crowns are circlets of silver or gold ornamented with filigree work. There is a peak or, strictly speaking, a spike at the back, called *u'tiew-lasubon*, which stands up some six inches above the crown. There are long ropes or tassels of silver hanging from the crown down the back. Earrings are worn both by men and women. The former affect a pattern peculiar to themselves, viz. large gold pendants of a circular or oval shape. Women wear different patterns of earrings, according to locality. An ornament which I believe is also peculiar to the Khasis is the *rupa-tylli*, or silver collar. This is a broad flat silver collar which is allowed to hang down over the neck in front, and which is secured by a fastening behind.

1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

SECTION II.

OCCUPATION.

241 463 [162] THE greater proportion of the population subsists by cultivation. Cultivation of rice may be divided under two headings, high land or dry cultivation and low land or wet cultivation. The total number of persons who subsist by agriculture generally in the hills, is given in the last Census Report as 154,907, but the term agriculture includes the cultivation of the potato, the orange, betel-nut and *pán*. A full description of the different forms of agriculture will be given under the 463 heading "Agriculture." A considerable number of Khasis earn 482 their livelihood as porters, carrying potatoes to the markets on 439 the Sylhet side of the district, from whence the crop is conveyed by means of country boats to the different places of call of river-steamers in the Surma Valley, the steamers carrying the potatoes to Calcutta. Potatoes are also largely carried to Shillong by porters, where the tuber is readily bought by Marwari merchants, who load it in carts to be conveyed by road to Gauhati, from which station it is again shipped to 482 Calcutta and Upper Assam. Many persons are also employed in 463 carrying rice up the hill from Theria to Cherrapunji, Shillong, [465] and on to other places. Salt is also carried by porters by this route. Many Khasis, both male and female, live by daily labour in this way, earning as much as eight annas, and [162] six annas a day, respectively. The Census Report of 1901 shows some 14,000 "general labourers" in the district, the greater number of whom are porters and coolies, both male [357] and female, employed on road work and on building. In Shillong the Government Offices and the printing press give employment to a certain number of Khasis. There is also a fair demand for Khasi domestic servants, both among the Europeans and the Bengali and Assamese clerks who are employed at the headquarters of the Administration.

1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

243 same period) for the latter.* The average out-turn of both
433 kinds is extremely poor, as compared with that of any description of rice grown in the plains. The rice grown in the hills is said by the Agricultural Department to be of inferior quality, the grain when cleaned being of a red colour, and extremely
244 coarse. The cultivation of potatoes is practically confined to the Khasi Hills, there being little or none in the Jaintia Hills. The normal out-turn of the summer crop sown in February and harvested in June is reported by the Agricultural Department to be five times the quantity of seed used, and that of the winter crop, sown in August and September on the land from which the summer crop has been taken, and harvested in December, twice the quantity of seed. The winter crop is raised chiefly for the purpose of obtaining seed for the spring sowings, as it is found difficult to keep potatoes from the summer crop in good condition till the following spring. The usual quantity of seed used to the acre at each sowing is about 9 maunds, so that the gross out-turn of an acre of land cultivated with potatoes during the year may be taken at 63 maunds, and the net out-turn, after deducting the quantity of seed used, at 45 maunds. The above estimate of the Agricultural Department rests chiefly on the statements of the cultivators, and has not been adequately tested by experiment.

244 Since the appearance of the potato disease in 1885-86 there
439 has been a great decrease in the area under potato cultivation. In 1881-82 the exports of potatoes from the district were as high as 126,981 maunds. From 1886-87 the exports began annually to decrease until in 1895-96 the very low figure of 8,296 maunds was reached. The figures of export for the last nine years are as follows :—

1896-97	16,726 maunds.
1897-98	7,805 „
1898-99	9,272 „
1899-00	5,422 „
1900-01	29,142 „
1901-02	38,251 „
1902-03	36,047 „
1903-04	50,990 „

* See Bulletin No. 5 of the Agricultural Department of Assam, 1898, pp. 4 and 5.

1: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

It will be seen that in the three years following the earthquake of 1897 the exports fell very low indeed. Since 1901 the trade has been steadily recovering, and the exports of 1904 reached half a lakh of maunds.

It will be observed that there has been some improvement, but the exports are still not half what they were in 1881-82. There are two kinds of sweet potatoes grown in the district, the Garo potato (*u phan Karo*), which appears to have been introduced from the Garo Hills, and *u phan sawlia*, the latter being distinguished from the Garo potato by its having a red skin, the Garo potato possessing a white skin. These kinds of potato are planted on all classes of land except *hali*, they do best on jhumed and homestead lands. The yam proper (*u phan shynreh*) is also largely grown. The small plant with an edible root called by the Khasis *u sohphang* (*flemingia vestita Benth.*), is also largely grown. The roots of the plant after being peeled are eaten raw by the Khasis. As far as we know, this esculent is not cultivated in the adjoining hill districts. Job's tears (*coix lachryma-Jobi*) * are extensively grown, and are planted frequently with the *sohphlang* mentioned above. This cereal forms a substitute for rice amongst the poorer cultivators. Maize or Indian corn (*u riew hadem*) is grown frequently, thriving best on homestead land, and requires heavy manuring; it is grown in rotation with potatoes. Next in importance to rice comes the millet (*u krai*), as a staple of food amongst the Khasis. There are three varieties of millets generally to be seen in the Khasi Hills:—*u 'rai-soh* (*setaria Italica*), *u 'rai-shan* (Paspalum sanguinale), and *u 'rai-truh* (Eleusine coracana). *U 'rai-shan* is cultivated in rotation with the potato, *u 'rai-soh* and *u 'rai-truh* are generally cultivated on jhumed land, where they thrive well. Millet is sometimes used instead of rice in the manufacture of spirit by the Khasis; *u rymbai-ja* (*phaseolus calcaratus*), and *u rymbai ktung* (*glycine soja*) are beans which are cultivated occasionally. Khasis highly prize the fruit of the plantain, which they give to infants mashed up. The following are the best known varieties:—*Ka kait khún, ka kait siem, ka kait kulbuit, ka kait bamon, ka kait shyieng.*

* Khasi *u soh-riew.*

I: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

mould. The plant[1/1] is watered by means of small bamboo aqueducts which are constructed along the hill-sides, the water being conducted along them often considerable distances. As in the plains, the leaves of the *pán* creeper are collected throughout the year.

The bay leaf (*'la tyrpád*, or *tezpát*) is classified in the *Agricultural Bulletin* as *Cinnamomum tamala*, and there is a note in the column of remarks that "this tree, as well as one or two others of the same genus, yields two distinct products, *tezpát* (bay leaf) and cinnamon bark." The bay leaf is gathered for export from the extensive gardens in Maharam, Malaisohmat, Mawsynram, and other Khasi States. The plants are raised from seed, although there are no regular nurseries, the young seedlings being transplanted from the jungle, where they have germinated, to regular gardens. Bay leaf gardens are cleared of jungle and weeds periodically; otherwise no care is taken of them. The leaf-gathering season is from November to March. The leaves are allowed to dry for a day or two in the sun, and then packed in large baskets for export. The gathering of bay leaf begins when the trees are about four years old.

The following are the other minor crops which are grown in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills:—

Pineapples, turmeric, ginger, pumpkins and gourds, the egg plant, chillies, sesamum, and a little sugar-cane. The arum* (*ka shiriw*) is also extensively grown in the hills, and forms one of the principal articles of food amongst the poorer classes; it is generally raised in rotation with potatoes, or is planted along with Job's tears. The stem of the arum is sometimes used as a vegetable, also for feeding pigs.

In the Jowai Sub-Division, notably at Nartiang, there are fairly good mangoes, which are more free from worms than those grown in the plains of Assam.

The Bhois and Lynngams cultivate lac. They plant *arhar dal*, *u landoo*, in their fields, and rear the lac insect on this plant. Last year the price of lac at Gauhati and Palasbari markets rose as high as Rs. 50 per maund of 82 lbs., it is said, but the price at the outlying markets of Singra and Boko was

* Colocasia esculenta, Beng. *Kachu*.

1/1 [i.e., the pán ---- Analyst]

1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

231 about Rs. 30. The price of lac has risen a good deal of late
435 years. Formerly the price was about Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a maund. The lac trade in the Jaintia Hills and in the southern portion of the Khyrim State is a valuable one. The profits, however, go largely to middle-men, who in the Jaintia Hills are Syntengs from Jowai, who give out advances to the Bhoi cultivators on the condition that they will be repaid in lac. The Marwari merchants from the plains attend all the plains markets which are frequented by the hill-men, and buy up the lac and export it to Calcutta. The whole of the lac is of the kind known as stick lac.

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443
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HUNTING.

224 The weapons used by the Khasis for hunting are bows and
[411] arrows, the latter with barbed iron heads, and spears which are used both for casting and thrusting. Before proceeding on a
[787] hunting expedition the hunters break eggs, in order to ascertain whether they will be successful or not, and to which jungle
[174] they should proceed. Offerings are also made to certain village deities, e.g. *U. Ryngkew*, *u Basa*, and *u Basa ki mrád*. A lucky day having been selected and the deities propitiated, the hunters start with a number of dogs trained to the chase, the latter being held on leashes by a party of men called *ki nongai-ksew*. When the dogs have picked up the scent some hunters are placed as "stops" (*ki ktem*), at points of vantage in the jungle, and the drive commences with loud shouts from the hunters, the same being continued until the object of the chase breaks into the open. The man who draws the first blood is called *u nongsiat*, and the second man who scores a hit *u nongban*. These two men get larger shares of the flesh than the others. The *nongsiat* obtains the lower half of the body of the animal, thighs and feet excepted, called *ka tdong*, and the *nongban* one of the forequarters called *ka tabla*. The other hunters obtain a string of flesh each, and each hound gets a string of flesh to itself. These hunting parties pursue deer
224 sometimes for many miles, and are indefatigable in the chase,
782 the latter lasting occasionally more than one day. In the Jaintia Hills, at the end of the chase, the quarry is carried to

1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

Colonel Lister, writing in 1853, estimated that 20,000 maunds of iron were exported from the hills in the shape of hoes to the Assam Valley, and in lumps of pig iron to the Surma Valley, where it was used by boat-builders for clamps. Nowadays the smelting of iron is carried on in very few places. There are still smelting-houses at Nongkrem and Nongsprung, but these are practically the only places left where smelting of iron ore goes on; there are many forges where rough iron brought from the plains is melted down and forged into bill-hooks and hoes. Messrs. Yule and Cracroft have described the native process of smelting iron, and it is only necessary to refer to their papers if information is required on the subject. Yule's account is a very full one, and is to be found at page 853, vol. xi. part ii. of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The system pursued, both in the extraction and in the subsequent smelting of the ore, is the same at the present day as that described by Yule. Dr. Oldham, writing in 1863, says, "The quality of this Khasi iron is excellent for all such purposes as Swedish iron is now used for. The impurity of the blooms (or masses of the metal in a molten state), however, as they are sent to market, is a great objection to its use, and the waste consequent thereon renders it expensive. It would also form steel or wootz (Indian steel) of excellent quality. I have no doubt that the manufacture could be greatly improved and possibly extended." Dr. Oldham, however, goes on to remark that the manufacture of iron could not be very much extended, owing to the scanty dissemination of the ore in the rocks, and the consequent high cost of obtaining it. At present the want of any permanent supply of water prevents the natives from working for more than a few days during the year, whilst the rains are heavy, and they can readily obtain sufficient force of water for the washing of the ore from its matrix. The export of iron in any form from the district has now almost died out, only a few hoes being brought down by the Khasis from Laitdom, in Khadsawphra, to the Burdwar and Palasbari markets in the Kamrup District of the Assam Valley. Iron of English manufacture has, of course, much cheapened the market, but probably the fact that the parts of the country in the neighbourhood of the rocks which contain the metal have

8: Gurdon G-3 (no date) 1904 AR7 Khasi AR7

—the *Shyngkup*, or porch, being flush with the ground. The *nengpei*, or centre room, is approached by a flight of steps. There are no windows, except one, which is bored on one side to admit light and air,—this is called the *pongthai*. Both Khasis and Syntengs, like other Indo-Chinese races, are much addicted to gambling, and drinking to excess is a national vice. Christianity has, through the agency of the Welsh Calvinistic Mission, gained a very striking extension, and may be said indeed to be leavening the whole nation. Schools are numerous, and are pretty well attended by girls as well as boys. The Christians, and those who have come under the influence of Christianity, have adopted a high standard of comfort, and their houses resemble English cottages more nearly than the huts with which one is familiar in India.

Agriculture.—The Khasis do not use the plough; they cultivate their fields with a peculiar-shaped hoe, or *mohkhiew*. They cultivate rice in the valleys, the rice being sown broadcast and the fields irrigated often after considerable labour. They also cultivate hill rice on the uplands, which they sow broadcast. The potato, which was introduced into the Khasi Hills by Mr. David Scott about the year 1830,[1] is extensively cultivated and forms one of the principal articles of export. Job's-tears (*Coix lachryma*), several kinds of millet, Indian-corn, the *Sohphlang* (*Flemingia vestita*), are also largely cultivated. The valleys on the southern slopes of the hills have extensive orange groves, the oranges, especially those grown in the neighbourhood of Shella, being famous for their quality. The betel, vine, and areca nut are also largely grown on the southern side of the hills and in the low valleys, these plantations being irrigated by elaborate systems of aqueducts. The leaf of the bay tree (*Tatyrpad*) is collected, and is exported to the Sylhet plains. The Syntengs differ from the Khasis, in that they make use of the plough. Both Khasis and Syntengs are industrious cultivators, and they possess a certain rough and ready knowledge of the uses of manure. A more detailed description of agriculture in these hills will be given in the monograph.

[1] Khasi and Jaintia Hills Administration Report for 1875-76 by Colonel Bivar.

2. *Matriarchal customs and law of inheritance of property.*—The mother is the head of the house, and is both owner and the custodian of the family property as long as she lives. Males can own no property amongst either Khasis or Syntengs except self-acquired property. On the death of the mother, in the case of the Khasis, the family property passes to the youngest daughter. According to some authorities, however, the property would in practice be divided amongst all the surviving daughters. Failing daughters, the property passes to the youngest niece, and failing a niece, to the youngest female cousin. The same

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

vation is impossible because of the cold climate. In the past, Khasi economy must have remained at a very primitive stage.

Potato cultivation has been much encouraged along with the development of Shillong and the opening of the motor road to Gauhati from Shillong after the Independence of India when Shillong became the seat of the Assam Government, as well as the capital of the Khasi-Jaintia Hills. Shillong has become an important trading centre, where big merchants collect the harvests of potatoes in exchange for rice, clothes and various other goods from the Assam valley. These changes have introduced the Khasis into an active commercial economy which again has brought about various changes in their social life. Recently coal excavations have started in the upland Khasi Hills, and many Khasi become miners.

Thus the history of the Khasi Hills during the last hundred years has changed a great deal the picture of the Hills. However, dark corners still remain in Bhoi, War and in the area bordering on the Garo Hills. These have been kept in a vacuum between the Hindu civilization of the bordering plain and the modernization of the uplands centred in Shillong. In these areas, the people are still practising primitive jhum cultivation. I have chosen two villages in War located in one of these area as subjects of my major field-work.

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15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

APPENDIX

SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM SHELLA AND JATINGA

SHELLA

Shella is situated on the lowest of the southern slopes of the Khasi Hills, bordering on the Sylhet plain of East Pakistan. For centuries the people of Shella maintained close trading connections with the people of the plain, so that they have been much influenced by the Hindu. They have been to some extent divorced economically and culturally from their own people who live in the uplands and on higher part of the slopes. Actually, this is a natural result of their geographical location. From Cherrapunjee, the southern edge of the upland Khasi Hills, only a narrow footpath goes down to Shella. The altitude of Cherrapunjee is about 5,000 feet and of Shella from 500 to 1,000 feet, and the distance between them is 8 miles. The path descends very steeply and is full of hard stones. This difficulty of communication is also why the Hindu influence did not penetrate the upland Khasi, as in the case of the Jaintia Hills.[1]

This area has a unique political organization which differs from the majority of Khasi states who are traditionally ruled by the members of the Siem clan. Shella is organized as a confederation, called 'Shella Confederacy,' and consists of four local villages. The head of the village is called *wadadhar*, and is elected by the villagers every three years. The number of households of the Shella Confederacy was about 900 in January 1956. The names of the four villages and their *wadadhar* in 1956 were:

Name of village	*Name of wadadhar*
1. Shella	Devish Mohan Roy
2. Mushtoh	Ditojou Roy
3. Nongtrai	Orju Roy
4. Tyngnger	Jabuni Roy

Each village is divided into sections. For instance, Shella village has nine sections: (1) Jasir, (2) Disong, (3) Duba, (4) Jamau, (5) Nongrum, (6) Nongnong,

1. However, Shella was the only way out and the main gateway from the Khasi Hills to the plain; it was here that the British first entered the Khasi Hills. They proceeded from Shella to Cherrapunjee and made the latter headquarters of the Khasi Hills in 1833.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

Shella

Confederacy forms a more marked endogamous community, through being cut off geographically and economically from the rest of the Khasi, and socially from the neighbouring Hindu people.

The Economy and the People.

Shella lies along the upper part of the Shella River and stretches upwards along the steep slope, looking down towards the Bengal plain. The climate of this part of the hills is considered to be one of the worst in tropical India for human habitation. The Bengal plain, though warmer than this area, is considered more healthy. This border land is the zone of malaria, typhoid, black fever, cholera, etc. None of the Bengalee peasants dare to live in such an area. However, it is the most fertile for products such as betel-nuts, pan-leaves, oranges, bananas and pineapples, and it also produces limestone. These people seem to prefer to settle in this zone and to enjoy its prosperity, at the expense of human lives: every year, especially between March and September, the inhabitants suffer from various fevers and dysentry and other diseaes, many of the weaker facing death.

Before the Partition of India and Pakistan, the products of Shella were carried down the Shella River to Sylhet, one of the biggest centres in East Bengal, which brought unimaginable wealth to the Shella people. Their houses were built by carpenters from Sylhet. The style and structure of these houses were exceptionally elaborate for the Khasi. They purchased vast rice fields in the plain, which used to be cultivated by Bengalee and Garo labourers engaged by them. These Khasi do not themselves know how to cultivate rice fields; they have always been managers or landowners. Their boys used to be sent to high schools and colleges in Sylhet. As a result of their trading with the Bengalee, many of them read and speak fluent Bengalee. There is no difference between their style of clothing and that of the Bengalee, though the women maintain their traditional dress in the Shella style.

They have thus been distinguished from the rest of the Khasi not only geographically, but also economically and culturally. Their personality also differs sharply from the rest of the Khasi. They are very sociable, and quick, a quality lacking among the Khasi of Sohkynduh and Kongton. They are clever enough to deal with strangers. The upland Khasi say Shella people are very cunning. This remark shows one side of these people. They had to be cunning, since they traded with the Sylhet Bengalee who were said to be the most cunning of their race. Their role in the trade and in the history of the modernization of the Hills was considerable. For centuries they represented intellectual Khasi owing to their contact with Hindu civilization, while the Hills remained in darkness. They assumed an important role when the British established an administration in the Hills, and even up to now, many leading Khasi originated from this area: for instance, Lati Hat, the first interpreter of the British Headquarters at Cherrapunjee; Jeebon Roy, who was the first Magistrate among the Khasi; Maham Sing, a lawyer and Member of the Legislative Assembly (the grandson of Jeebon Roy); Nichols Roy, Minister of Health and Prisons of the Assam Government, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Missionary of the Church of God; R. R. Thomas (brother of Nichols Roy), Principal of the Gauhati University, etc.

Through constant cultural contact with Hindu, and encouraged by their economic prosperity, the Shella Khasi, like the Jaintias, have been much influenced by Hindu culture. However, this does not mean that the people of Shella adopted the Hindu beliefs. Though there is a small Hindu shrine, and some ceremonial elements were borrowed from the Hindu, most of the

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

people remained non-Hindu in their basic beliefs and social customs. Hindu influences are nevertheless predominant in their culture, especially in their way of living which shows a practical adaptability, somewhat similar to the Japanese acceptance of modern western culture without becoming Christian. In my census of Shella village, the people calling themselves 'Hindu' amount to 40 per cent of the total, but they are the recent converts to the Ramakrishna School which established a missionary station at Shella after the Partition. The Christians constitute 30 per cent of the total, most of them having been converted during the last ten years, as in the case of the Ramachrishna School.[1] The rest remain as they were, of Khasi belief. These conversions to either Ramachrishna or Christianity seem to have been encouraged by the unstable situation of the people resulting from the recent economic depression in this area.

The Partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947, which drew the borderline a few miles south of Shella village, considerably upset village economy by stopping all trade with Bengal, though a limited amount of trade is allowed with local people at the border. Because of this political change, all the produce of Shella gardens is rotting away for lack of markets, while all of the rice fields were taken by Pakistan. Goods now come to Shella only from the uplands, carried upon men's shoulders over the most difficult pass, which makes everything very expensive. Many families have sold their gold and other treasures, and some families are facing starvation.[2]

Concerning the conversion to a new religion, an interesting phenomenon is to be observed. The conversion to Christianity or to Ramakrishna is mostly by individual: I found in my census that the wife and husband often belong to different religions. This is a very different picture from the Garo, among whom I always found that the husband and wife belonged to the same religion: the conversion of the husband to Christianity was always followed by that of the wife. I think this reflects the structural differences which influence the actual relationship between the husband and wife. Among these Khasi, instead of the husband and wife, the maternal uncle and his nephews and nieces are mostly of the same religion. The function of the *iing*, the most important social and religious unit, thus appears also in the conversion to a new religion, stronger than that of a domestic unit.

Intermarriage.

The close economic and cultural contact of the Shella people and the Bengalee is not matched by social contact. The essential barrier between the two peoples is the difference of religion which dominates the entire social order in each society. Though these Khasi were important traders, richer than the neighbouring Hindu peasants, they were considered by the Hindu as outcasts with whom they never shared social activities. Intermarriages were therefore very rare. In Shella village, only two exceptional cases were found in my census:

1. A Khasi woman married to a Gurka (cattle-keeper); they live at Shella Bazaar (Sholap).
2. A Khasi woman has marital relation with a Bengalee medical doctor who has resided at Disong in Shella for six years. He already has a Bengalee

1. These two entirely different missionary activities are competing with each other, and are somewhat related to the political powers within this area.
2. The state government is doing its best to provide them with additional facilities: for example, providing air transport for the transportation of oranges from Shella to Gauhati and Calcutta. However, such arrangements cannot cover the great economic loss suffered by the Shella people.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

178 like the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki. But after the period of
563 economic prosperity as I shall describe in the next section, the Jatinga people
621 reached a rather high level of education, while most of the neighbouring tribes
[871] remained illiterate. Their standard of living likewise improved. Fashionable girls of Jatinga who have studied at the Convent school in Shillong, and speak English and Hindi, cannot marry half-naked tribesmen who work in the jungle. They prefer to intermarry with Moslem, Panjabee or Assamese who belong to amore sophisticated community, and through whom they can enjoy urban life. Thus the orientation of the intermarriage of the people of Jatinga has changed, along with the growth of Jatinga.

It should be noted that intermarriages came mostly through the contacts at Haflong, where people used to go once a week for the bazaar, rather than through direct contacts with neighbouring villages.

Economy of Jatinga and its Relation to Neighbouring Tribes.

178 It is very interesting to find two different kinds of economy in the same
171 ecological background: Jatinga Khasi practise pan-leaf and orange cultivation
245 and depend mainly on a trading economy, while the other neighbouring tribal peoples practise jhum cultivation, almost a subsistence economy. This situation has remained unchanged for the last fifty years since the establishment of Jatinga village.

101 The first Jatinga immigrants occupied one ridge of the mountain where the
245 present Jatinga is situated. Formerly, this land belonged to the Zemi-Naga, one of the old inhabitants of the Cachar Hills, who possessed a vast jungle area for jhum cultivation. It seems that there was no objection to the Khasi occupying this small spot: it was apparently too small an area for the jhum cultivator —pan-leaf cultivation of the Khasi requires less than one twentieth of the land of the usual jhum cultivation. The Khasi who started pan-leaf cultivation were able to accumulate some capital, and after several years they started orange gardens. They had had experience of orange cultivation in their homeland, but this was the first time they had operated commercially.

245 The success of this orange cultivation was beyond their dreams. Hearing
434 of good oranges at Jatinga, many Bengalee merchants from Dacca, Sylhet,
• 439 Silchar and Gauhati began to come to buy them. Moreover, the village had the great advantage of being situated near the railway station. Oranges were
[496] sold by carloads. Unimaginable wealth came to the Jatinga people. Especi-
[871] ally the founder's family, including his brother's and sister's, became extraordinarily wealthy; their income used to be Rs. 20,000 a year. The children were sent to the school which was established in the village and some were educated at colleges in Dacca, Sylhet and Shillong. The villagers had
[362] beautiful houses built by Manipuri and Bengalee carpenters. Actually the houses of Jatinga were known as some of the best construction in Assam.

245 Like the Shella people, they were managers of gardens and employed workers.
46 Wealthy households used to engage several labourers annually, most of them from Jaintia where the Jatinga people had originated. These workers were provided with shelter in the servant quarters of their employer's house, but they had to provide meals for themselves. They were paid daily according to the work done. They were available to other households, when their employer had no work. Some labourers were also engaged locally among the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki, though not as many as among the Jaintia.
245 These local tribes were fairly well occupied by their jhum cultivation, and not
464 used to being employed as workers. Therefore, most of them were not regular

16: McCormack E-4,5 (1956-1958) 1964
[P. 106 B] AR7 Khasi AR7

1960-28: 2, Bareh 1962.] **Demography.** According to the 1951 census of India, the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills District contained 221,962 Khasis and 97,532 Syntengs, Pnars, and Jaintias (India [Republic] 1962: 57). These figures, together with those for Khasis enumerated in Cachar (4,008), Mikir and North Cachar Hills (467), Lakhimpur (257), Sibsagar (270), and Darrang (211) districts, and those for Syntengs enumerated in Mikir and North Cachar District (464), yield a total of 326,224 Khasis. **History and cultural relations.** Khasis believe that they had supernatural origin in Khasi Hills (see Gait 1926: 280 for historical evidence, and Rafy 1920: 5-9 for myth, but see also Costa 1956, 1960; Gordon 1907: 10-11, and Chatterji 1953: 12). Khasi tradition also states that in early times they moved gradually from east to west, from Jaintia toward Khasi Hills, in the practice of swidden agriculture (Gotphoh 1947: 97-99). The salient fact of known Khasi history, which begins generally in the mid-sixteenth century A.D. when there already existed the present-day 25 native Khasi chiefdoms, is the distinctive line of development followed by the separate kingdom of Jaintia. To the north, Jaintia was successively tributary, in part or in whole, to the Kachari kingdom (ca. 1220 A.D.), the Koch kingdom (strongest ca. 1500 A.D.), and the Ahom kingdom (strongest ca. 1700 A.D.) (Shakespear 1914: Map 1). To the south, about 1500 A.D., Jaintia extended its rule over a tract of Sylhet, which was populated by Hindus and Muslims, and saw its kings fall thereafter under Brahman influence. In the early 1800s, Jaintia became involved in the fratricidal strife then prevalent in the ruling family of Manipur. In 1830, after the Jaintia king ignored British warnings not to seize British subjects for human sacrifice, Jaintia was punished by the British annexation of the Jaintia parganas in Sylhet. The Jaintia king then voluntarily turned over to the British the hills area of his domain, so that the whole of Jaintia became part of British India and, in 1860, came to be taxed as such, although the Jaintias were otherwise allowed to maintain their traditional system of village government. • By contrast, the remaining Khasi states had few formal external relations until British times. Khasis raided and traded in both the Brahmaputra and Sylhet valleys, but were basically turned inward on their own hills, where warfare between villages and between the states was apparently common. Khasis came into indirect relation with the British in 1765, when Sylhet and its markets became part of British India. In the 1790s, stepped-up Khasi raids into Sylhet caused the British to throw up a deterring line of forts along the foothills. Later, it became necessary to place an embargo on Khasi products in the Sylhet markets. In 1827, the British penetrated into western Khasi Hills by negotiating with the Khasi chief of Nongkhlaw State to build a road through his territory, linking the recently annexed Brahmaputra valley with Calcutta. For three decades

thereafter, the British negotiated treaties with all the Khasi states, the last treaty being signed in 1862. It was contracted that the chiefs would be subject to the authority of a resident political agent, whose duties would involve maintaining law and order, judging cases of heinous crimes, approving the popular selection of any new chief, and exercising control over certain categories of natural resources. Khasis were guaranteed noninterference in their customary way of life, and they were not then, nor are they now, taxed. Most Khasis, as opposed to Jaintias, were never an integral part of British India, but they did undergo social change as a result of British presence. To summarize Mills (n.d.): (1) The British introduced the potato, which the Khasis rapidly took up as a cash crop for marketing as far as Calcutta. The intensive specialization exhausted the soil and made for ever-poorer crops. (2) Christian missionaries made large numbers of converts, and there arose the difficult question of whether a Christian should inherit property that traditionally was earmarked for her performance of non-Christian religious rituals. (3) About 1864 the British transferred their headquarters from Cherrapunji to Shillong. When they made Shillong the capital of the entire state of Assam, non-Khasis flocked to it, land values soared, and the concept of private property became increasingly important. Khasis began to marry with members of other ethnic groups, which introduced confusion into traditional social patterns. These problems were exacerbated during World War II, when Shillong and its environs enjoyed enormous economic prosperity. One notable aftermath of this affluence has been the accelerated enrollments in schools and colleges. Hundreds of Khasis now have the B.A., M.A., and even the Ph.D. degree. • With the Independence of India in 1947, and under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India (which was drafted by a Khasi), the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills District became a Part B, or Autonomous, Tribal Area, to be governed by a District Council composed largely of Khasis and Jaintias, and responsible not to the Legislature of Assam, but to the Governor of Assam as agent of the President of India. The native-state system and the chiefs still exist, and the District Council finds it difficult to effect legislation which is neither offensive to regional custom nor a simple blueprint of ill-fitting all-India legislation. The major political schism at this time is between Jaintias, who are accustomed to centralized authority and taxation, and Khasis, who resist the notion of taxation to support the work of a central District Council. [Cf. Gait 1939; Aitchison 1931; Bhuyan 1949; Morris 1910.]

SETTLEMENT PATTERN AND HOUSING. Settlement pattern. Khasis live sedentarily in named, nucleated, and unplanned villages which are situated just below hill summits to avoid strong winds but still be defensible, and which usually include a de-

19: Assam G-5 (1950) 1963 A87 Khasi A87

CHAPTER III

The Border Area

3. 1 **Definition of Border Area.**—The term 'border area' although very frequently used does not refer to any well demarcated area. It was, therefore, decided after a joint discussion between the Director of Statistics with the Deputy Commissioner of the district and Subdivisional Officer, Jowai, that area within 20 miles of the Indo-Pak border line would be considered as the 'border area' for the purpose of the present survey. The list of the villages falling in this area was supplied by the Deputy Commissioner and the Subdivisional Officer.

3. 2 **Condition of the Border Area before partition.**—The border area under review thus comprised of the southern slopes of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and a narrow strip of plains adjoining the southern slopes running along the Pakistan border. The area extends lengthwise over a length of about 120 miles, roughly from Mahenkhola on the west to Sonapur on the east thus covering an area of 2,610 sq. miles approximately, comprising of 604 villages inhabited by population of 74 thousands.

Barring the barren and rocky top plateaus the slopes are utilised for the production of valuable cash crops on intensive scale. These slopes provide suitable soil and climate for the profitable crops like arecanut, tezpatta, betel-leaf, oranges, pineapples and other fruits. On account of rich yields which such plantations give to the cultivators these slopes were, more densely inhabited and intensively cultivated than would appear possible from the topography of the area. Even the most inaccessible tracts in the slopes has been converted into rich orchards, wherefrom the produce was carried by headloads over steep gradients for several miles. Due to steep gradients little valley un, except some jhooming here and there, could be made of this area.

Because of the very topography, this land had its natural connections with Sylhet district now forming part of East Pakistan. From time immemorial the area had a flourishing trade with Sylhet district. It was a two-way traffic. The cash crops found eager buyers in the people of Sylhet, from whom in turn the people in the border area obtained supplies of rice, fish, vegetables and other necessities of daily life. Thus in prepartition days they enjoyed a very prosperous and settled economy. The rich buildings in the border area villages which are now lettering away, bear eloquent testimony to the past prosperity of the border economy.

With the partition of the country in 1947, trade with the plains of Sylhet, now forming part of East Pakistan, was restricted. As a result the whole economy of this region was completely shattered and the countryside which once hummed with activity and abundance was over-shadowed with unemployment, poverty and despair. All the cash crops the mainstay of the border people lost the market in East Pakistan. For want of communication facilities the produce could not be

transported to other parts of Indian Union. The prices of some of the daily crops recorded a disproportionate fall unprecedented before. The price of oranges which ruled at Rs. 20-00 to Rs. 22-00 per ton (1,024 nos.) tumbled down to Rs. 2-00 to Rs. 10-00 per ton, that of betel leaf which used to sell at Rs. 20-00 to Rs.22-00 per basti (7,200 leaves) came down to 'Rs.2-00 to Rs.3-00 per ton. Tangerine and other fruits also suffered equally. The worst of all was that even at this rock bottom price the produce was not lifted. The following figures quoted from the memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister by the Border People's Association which are claimed to have been collected from individual growers are indicative of the extent to which the border trade suffered after partition.

TABLE A-1

Annual exports from United Khasi & Jaintia Hills to East Bengal before and after partition

(In thousand rupees)

Items	Pre-partition exports			Post-partition exports		
	1946-47 rupees	1946-47 rupees	1947-48 rupees	1948-49 rupees	1949-50 rupees	1950-51 rupees
1. Oranges	15,000	2,000	150	350	100	350
2. Betel	4,800	600	300	600	2000	700
3. Tangerine	2,000	600				
4. Vegetables	1,600	600	150	350	700	150
5. Arecanuts	1,600	200	--	--	--	--
6. Betel	25	--	--	--	--	--
7. Betel-leaves	3,500	600	50	50	1600	650
8. Bamboo, canes, reeds, etc.		--	--	--	--	--
9. Spices, turmeric, chillies, pepper	20	05	02	01	02	02
10. Fruits, banana, plums, pine-apples, pomeloes, pears and papaya.	1,200	300	150	300	500	150
11. Limestone	24,000	17,000	11,000	6,000	5,000	5,000

The difficulty of getting adequate supply of foodgrains and other essentials of daily life posed a serious problem. Due to communication difficulties arrangements for adequate supply of these commodities from other parts of Indian Union could not be made. The supply from

19: Assam G-S (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7

East Pakistan to which the people in the border areas were entitled in the strength of various trade agreements of the Government of India with the authorities in Pakistan, were also scanty. The situation was still more aggravated due to the stringent measures adopted by authorities in Pakistan, on the plea of prevention of smuggling, in December, 1957 when the entire border trade virtually came to a standstill.

This chaos in border economy has resulted in widespread unemployment among the border people. There being no market for the produce, the owners ceased to take proper care of their orchards and plantations. As a result thousands of labourers who were employed in the orchards were thrown out of employment. Similar was the condition of those who were employed in the transportation of various commodities such as merchandise of trade etc. A large section of the people engaged in collection of limestone were also rendered unemployed with the set back received by the trade in limestone with East Pakistan. Due to stoppage of trans-border trade, petty traders engaged in distributive trade, also suffered.

Many of the border people possessing paddy lands and orchards in areas that are located in Pakistan had to abandon them. The following table will show the amount of land lying in Pakistan belonging to the farmer in the selected villages of border area :—

TABLE A-2

Name of village	Area of land lost through partition		
	No. of families who possessed land in Pakistan	Area (acres)	Average per family (acres)
1. Mongpi	07	057·00	8·11
2. Shella	9	175·40	19·40
3. Shalpung	18	130·00	7·20
4. Balay	2	1·50	0·75
5. Mawlai	nil	..	..
6. Lyngkhat	5	85·00	17·00
7. Sawmung	10	330·75	33·15
8. Syndai	9	63·50	7·00
9. Arkhi	8	40·00	5·00
10. Umlawang	nil	..	..

A few families who did not have any landed interest on this side of the border were reported to have migrated to Pakistan. Most of the families are even now paying tax to East Pakistan authorities even though they are not getting any returns because they do not want to lose their right on land.

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

There is considerable trade carried on in
245 *tejpát* or bay leaves, the trees being extensively cultivated by the
439 inhabitants of the lower slopes of the hills on the Sylhet border. The finest oranges in India are also grown in groves in the same tract, the value of the trade in which is now (1876) estimated to amount
237 to £3760 per annum. Lac is gathered by the Máhirs in the Jáintiá
439 Hills, but not to any great extent. Bees are both domesticated
231 and found wild, and an extensive trade in bees-wax is carried on, the amount exported being estimated at from three hundred to four hundred *maunds* annually. The whole of the Hills, where there is
233 no forest, and where the land is not under cultivation, consists of
621 rich pasture grounds, which are held in common by the villagers
651 and pay no revenue to Government.

137 The forests of the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills do not yield much profit either to the British Government or to the chiefs. There
[648] are no reserved forests in the District; and according to the Deputy-
[659] Conservator, the total area of unreserved forest, *i.e.* of land covered with timber trees and not at present required for *jhúm* cultivation, is only 150 square miles. The trees found are chiefly pine, and those classified as 'mixed upper hill forests.' At an elevation of 3000 feet, the Pinus Kasia predominates over all other vegetation and forms almost pure pine forests. It is found also at lower heights, and there attains larger dimensions, but only in the case of isolated trees. The 'mixed upper hill forests' are confined to a series of sacred groves, which clothe the topmost ridge of the watershed between the valleys of the Brahmaputra and Surmá. The characteristic trees are those of a temperate vegetation, chiefly consisting of oaks, chestnuts, magnolia, Schima, Cinnamomum, Prunus, Engelhardtia, etc. There are also numerous other timber trees, including the valuable *sál* (Shorea robusta) and the rubber tree (Ficus elastica); but on the whole the Khásí Hills are remarkable for the
[648] absence of forest. Early in 1874-75 measures were taken to put a
[659] stop to the indiscriminate burning of the forests, and the Siems and village officers were made responsible for the conservancy of the sacred groves. These endeavours have met with some success; but it is a very difficult thing to change the habits of a population, or to induce uncivilised tribes to incur a small temporary inconvenience for the sake of future benefit. The total area directly protected from fire during the year 1875-76 is returned at 3618 acres; the expenditure was Rs. 199; and in ten prosecutions for breaches of forest rules, twenty-three persons were convicted.

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

at Dárjiling, who reported unfavourably on them. They have since been made over to the Siem of Nongklao, who is responsible for their being kept clear of weeds and protected against fire. Up to the close of 1875–76 the total expenditure had been Rs. 672, or £67, 4s. 0d.

FERÆ NATURÆ.—Tigers, elephants, rhinoceros, buffaloes, *mithuns* or wild cows, bears, leopards, wolves, jackals, foxes, wild hog, and several kinds of deer abound in the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills. The expense of keeping down tigers in the shape of Government rewards amounted to £44, 10s. 0d. in 1869-70. The rate of reward now paid is Rs. 25 or £2, 10s. 0d. per head. No rewards have ever been given for the destruction of venomous serpents. The number of deaths from wild beasts and snake-bite reported to the police amounted to 28 in 1866-67, 18 in 1867-68, 16 in 1868-69, and 26 in 1869-70. The small game found in the Hills consists of black partridges, hill partridges, quails, ducks, teal, snipe, and woodcocks. The *mahsír* fish is caught in the rivers. No regular trade is carried on in the skins of wild animals; and, except in the case of wild elephants, the *ferœ naturæ* are not made to contribute towards the wealth of the people.

ELEPHANTS.—Wild elephants are found in the lower ranges of the hills, and in the gorges opening on the valleys of the Surmá and the Brahmaputra. Each State in the Khásí Hills and each dolloiship in the Jáintiá Hills constitutes a separate hunting circle or *mahál*. In the Khásí States the conditions of elephant hunting are governed by rules framed in 1874-75 by the Chief Commissioner, and approved by the Government of India. These rules provide, (1) that the British Government will make no claim to royalty on account of elephants caught in the Khásí Hills; (2) that one half of the proceeds of the sale of each elephant caught shall be paid over to the chief whose State forms the *mahál*, and the other half retained by Government; (3) that if a chief wishes to hunt elephants on his own account, the *mahál* composed of his State shall be reserved from sale, and a special arrangement shall be made with him on the basis that half the proceeds of the hunting shall accrue to Government. A special form of hunting licence in accordance with these rules has been settled by the Chief Commissioner. In the Jáintiá Hills, as being British territory, the ordinary Assam rules are in force, in accordance with which leases of the *mahálls* are sold at intervals of two years to the highest bidder at

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243 the District, nor do any superior kinds of cereals appear to have been substituted for inferior ones.

THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF RICE CULTIVATION, in English and Khásí, are as follow:—The blade as it first shows, *spch-u-kyba;* the blade when well above the ground, *la-thylleng-u-kyba;* the ears when first formed, *lam-mat;* the ears beginning to ripen, *byr-tem;* the ripe ears, *la-hih;* unhusked rice, *u-kyba;* husked rice, *u-khaw;* cooked rice, *ka-ja.*

262 [435] [782] THE VARIOUS SOLID AND LIQUID PREPARATIONS made from rice are the following:—(1) *U-kypu*, cakes of different kinds, sold at six or twelve for a penny, according to size. (2) *U-shirá* or *gáh-khir*, prepared by the hillmen as an offering to their deity at the conclusion of the harvest. (3) *Kadam*, fermented rice water, sold at the rate of from three-farthings to threepence per quart, according to the strength of the liquor. (4) *Ka kiad-phatika* or *ka kiad-hdrak*, a kind of spirits distilled from rice, and sold at from threepence to four-pence-halfpenny per quart.

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243 OTHER CEREALS.—Indian corn, or *u-riu-ha-dem*, is grown on homestead lands. The ground is first manured, and the seed is sown about the middle of April. The crop is fit for cutting in September and October. A kind of millet seed called *u-krdi* is commonly sown with paddy on high lands. For want of more suitable land, however, this crop is often cultivated by itself on rocky slopes; and when this course is adopted, the jungle is first cut down in February and burnt. The seed is sown in April, and the crop gathered in December.

244 PULSES AND FIBRES.—Only two kinds of pulses are grown in the Hills, *u-rym-bai-ktung* and *u-rym-bai-já*, both of which are varieties of beans. They are sown on high lands in March and April, and gathered in December. The only fibre is that made from the pine-apple stalk, which is largely used for making netted bags.

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245 [439] MISCELLANEOUS CROPS.—(1) Oranges.—There are numerous orange plantations in the neighbourhood of Cherrá Púnjí, and the fruit is exported to all parts of Bengal. In the year 1876-77 the estimated exports were 9,400,000 in number, valued at Rs. 37,600, or £3760, at the rate of Rs. 12 or £1, 4s. per three thousand. These figures show a decrease in number as compared with the estimated export twenty years ago. The trees flower in March or April, and the fruit ripens in October and the following months. In some cases the oranges are allowed to remain on the trees till March, but

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generally the gathering does not extend beyond January. As a rule, the cultivation is confined to the valleys and slopes on the southern face of the hills. (2) Pine-apples are also largely cultivated on the southern slopes, and grow to great perfection on the limestone formation. The fruit ripens in May or June, and is exported in considerable quantities. In 1876-77 the export of pine-apples was valued at Rs. 8000 or £800. (3) Potatoes are extensively grown on slopes of high land, and also in the low-lying fields where the land is well drained. The tuber was first introduced into the Hills in 1830 by Mr. Scott, who was then the Governor-General's Agent. The season for sowing commences about the middle of February when the rains set in early, and in April when they are late. The ground is dug up and carefully manured with burnt earth, and holes are dug about nine inches deep, and the same distance from each other. These holes are then partially filled in with loose earth, and a potato or two halves of one placed in each. They are then filled up with dry manure and soil. When the plant is fifteen or twenty days old, the ground about the roots is loosened and the plant earthed up, and the land is kept carefully weeded. In about four months after sowing, the crop is gathered. During the cold weather a second crop is raised, the seeds being planted in September and the tubers dug up in December. Potato cultivation has largely increased of late years in the District. In 1876-77 the exports were approximately estimated at 200,500 *maunds*, or 7480 tons, valued at Rs. 501,250 or £50,125, at the rate of Rs. 2. 8 per *maund*, or £7 per ton. (4) Sugar-cane is grown, but not to any great extent; cuttings are planted in March, and the cane ripens by November or December. (5) *Pán* is extensively cultivated, the runner being trained up trees standing in deep and shady valleys. Planting is carried on during the months of April and May, but the leaves are not fit to be gathered till the plant is two years old. (6) The *supári* or betel-nut (Areca catechu), called *u-kwai* by the Khásiás, is grown on the lower southern slopes of the hills, and, together with the *pán* leaf, is consumed in immoderate quantities by the inhabitants, who measure distance by the number of *páns* consumed on a journey. It is also exported to the plains. (7) *U-soh-phlang*, a root crop resembling a small turnip, is sown on high lands in April and gathered in September. It is a poor vegetable, but the natives of the Hills are fond of it, and eat it either raw or cooked. (8) Cotton is grown on high lands and

245 244 [439] [177] [439] 249 244 000

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reared either for food or as articles of trade. A pair of ploughing oxen are worth about Rs. 32, or £3, 4s.; an ordinary cow, Rs. 12, or £1, 4s.; a score of kids six months old, Rs. 16, or £1, 12s.; and a score of full-grown pigs, from Rs. 100 to Rs. 160, or from £10 to £16.

THE AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS in use in the District consist of a plough, called *ka-jing-lúr* in Khásí, and a hoe or *kudálí*, called *u-mo-khiew*. When the cultivation is carried on by means of oxen, the plough is used, the hoe alone being used when the land is cultivated by manual labour. In the Khási Hills the use of the plough, except in a few rare cases, is entirely unknown; but in the Jáintiá Hills, oxen and ploughs are used to a greater extent. What is technically termed 'a plough' of land is equivalent to four English acres; a pair of oxen, together with the necessary implements, would represent a capital of about Rs. 40, or £4.

WAGES.—The Deputy-Commissioner reports that the price of labour in the District has more than doubled in the last ten years. The rates obtaining at present are from eightpence to one shilling a day for an ordinary labourer, and from one shilling to eighteenpence a day for a porter. An agricultural day-labourer earns sixpence, and a woman at the same work fourpence-halfpenny a day. Bricklayers, carpenters, and blacksmiths earn from a shilling to eighteenpence a day. The new Station of Shillong, the present seat of the Local Government, was established in May 1864, and since that date the demand for labour has markedly increased. The extension of the cultivation of potatoes has also had an appreciable effect on the price of labour.

PRICES OF FOOD GRAINS.—Of the different descriptions of rice in the markets of the District, the better sorts are imported from the neighbouring Districts of Sylhet and Kámrúp. The local produce is considered fit only for the use of the Khásiás. The price of the better descriptions depends entirely upon the distance from which the supplies come. In a distant market like that of Shillong, rice of the best quality generally sells at from 6 to 7 *sers* for the rupee, or from 16s. to 18s. 8d. per cwt.; and rice of inferior quality, which is only used by the poorer classes, at from 9 to 10 *sers* for the rupee, or from 11s. 2d. to 12s. 5d. per cwt. Little or no trade is carried on in unhusked grain. Paddy produced in the District generally sells at an average of from 15 to 16 *sers* per rupee, or from 7s. to 7s. 6d. per cwt. Indian corn, which is only grown to a small extent, is sold

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at the rate of two or three ears for a farthing; and sugar-cane, the cultivation of which is also very limited, at from a little over a farthing to three-farthings per cane. A fermented liquor called *kadam*, made from rice, is sold at from three-farthings to threepence a quart, according to strength; and a distilled spirit called *phatika*, or *kakiad-hárak*, at from threepence to fourpence-halfpenny a quart. This latter description of liquor is sometimes made very strong. No records exist by which the present prices of the above articles can be compared with the rates ruling ten years ago. The maximum price of rice during the famine of 1866-67 was 5 *sers* 6 *chhatáks* for the rupee, or about £1 a hundredweight.

MEASURES, WEIGHTS, ETC.—The Hill people have no proper measurement of time or distance. If there be any standard for measuring distance, it is by the number of *pán* a man chews in the course of a journey, generally about one every half hour. In some parts of the District, land is measured by a stick called *ka dieng-nong*, varying in length from six to seven cubits. Liquids are measured in gourds of different measures, varying from half a *chhaták* to a *ser*, and also in bamboo tubes. Rice, potatoes, beans, etc. are measured in baskets, varying in size in different markets from two to eighty pounds.

In the Khásí Hills the inhabitants reckon eight days in the week, named as follows:—(1) Lyn-kah; (2) Nong-krem; (3) Um-long; (4) Rang-hep; (5) Shillong; (6) Pom-tih; (7) Um-nih; (8) Yeo-duh. In the Jáintiá Hills the eight days are named thus:—(1) Kyllao; (2) Pyn-sing; (3) Máo-long; (4) Máo-siang; (5) Máo-shai; (6) Pyn-kat; (7) Thym-blein; (8) Ka-hat. The Khásí months of the year, calculated by moons, are as follow:—(1) U Kylla lynkot; (2) U Rym-pang; (3) U Lyber; (4) U Laiong; (5) U Jimmang; (6) U Jilliw; (7) U Nai-túng; (8) U Nai-lar; (9) U Nai-lúr; (10) U Rysow; (11) U Nai-wing; (12) U Noh-prah.

LANDLESS LABOURING CLASSES.—There is, and always has been, a large class of labourers in the District who neither rent nor possess any land. Women and children are employed in manual out-door labour of all kinds.

VARIETIES OF LAND TENURE can hardly be said to exist. There is nothing whatever resembling the relations between landlord and tenant throughout the Khásí Hills. The lands as a rule are either ancestral property or belong to village communities, and are cultivated under unwritten but well-understood agreements. Of the wide

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

231 (£174, 8s.) was expended on the purchase of stock, including
648 cattle, sheep, and pigs from England. Even native cattle at the
654 elevation of Shillong fall off very much in the months of January and February from want of forage, and the Khásiás at this season generally drive them to lower slopes. But one of the chief objects in keeping cattle at the farm was to obtain manure; and *mati kaldi* (Phaseolus radiatus) was grown for them, cut green, and stocked
[731] for food. On this they did very well. In 1875-76, however, cattle disease broke out on the farm in a very virulent shape. Out of 39 cattle attacked, only 7, or 18 per cent., recovered, and the animals imported from England all died. There was also a heavy mortality in that year among the sheep and pigs. The following are the financial results for the two years:—1874-75—Expenditure, Rs. 13,297. 0. 5; receipts, Rs. 309. 2. 6: deficit, Rs. 12,987. 13. 11. 1875-76—Expenditure, Rs. 11,445. 8. 6; receipts, Rs. 1036. 15. 0: deficit, Rs. 10,408. 9. 6. Total deficit, Rs. 23,396. 7. 5, or £2339.
648 13s. In view of these figures the Chief Commissioner has deter-
654 mined to restrict farming operations to small experiments in irrigated *rabi* crops, and, as a measure of economy, to dispense with the services of the superintendent. The future expenditure on the farm will be insignificant. The establishment now (1877) consists of a *sardár* on Rs. 50 and a *chaukidár* on Rs. 10 a month (total, £72 a year), under the direct control of the Deputy-Conservator of Forests; the total number of live-stock is 64 head.

731 NATURAL CALAMITIES, such as blights, floods, or droughts, are not common in the District, although the crops in the Jáintiá Hills sometimes suffer from insects. So far as the Deputy-Commissioner is able to ascertain, no destruction of crops affecting the general harvest has occurred within the experience of the present generation.
[435] During the Orissa famine of 1866-67 the maximum price of common rice reached £1 per hundredweight, but no such distress was felt as to require Government relief operations. The price just mentioned was certainly equal to the rates prevalent in the famine-stricken localities; but prices always rule high in the Hills, and afford no just criterion of the state of affairs among the general body of the inhabitants. Distress was only felt by a small portion of the population, chiefly the Bengálí immigrants residing in the District,
262 who are generally a well-to-do class. The Hill people, as a rule, do
244 not eat potatoes, which they grow only for export; but in case of actual famine, they might fall back upon this crop for their own food
439 supply.

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supply. As the District depends so largely for its supply of rice upon Sylhet and Kámrúp, the state of the markets in those places exercises a greater influence on the rates in the Hills than any failure of the local harvest. In the year 1858 the price of common rice is said to have risen as high as *6 sers* for the rupee, or 18s. 8d. per cwt., in consequence of the failure of the crops in the plains.

ROADS AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.—The following are the eight principal lines of road in the Khási and Jáintiá Hills:—(1) Road from Shillong to Gauháti, in Kámrúp. This road has recently (1877) been opened for wheeled traffic throughout its entire length. The Deputy-Commissioner's Report for 1876-77 states that the number of passengers passing up and down may be estimated at about 800 or 1000 every month, and the number of carts already used at about 50. The *tonga dák* brings travellers up to Shillong from Gauháti in two days by a comfortable and easy carriage service, while for natives a cheaper conveyance by bullock cart is available. At Gauháti there is a good *dák* bungalow in charge of a *khánsámá*, where the usual accommodation provided in a hotel is to be found. The stages to Shillong are as follow:—(*a*) Gauháti to Bornihát, 17 miles. The road is good throughout. There is a *dák* bungalow in charge of a *chaukidár* at Bornihát, where grain and rice are procurable. (*b*) Bornihát to Nongpoh, 14½ miles. The road is hilly throughout, but good. At Nongpoh, which is at an elevation of 1900 feet, there is a *dák* bungalow in charge of a *khánsámá*, from whom tea, liquors, and biscuits, etc. can be obtained. The *dák* bungalow is furnished with bedding, linen, etc. Grain and rice can be purchased in the *bázár*. (*c*) Nongpoh to Um-sning, 16½ miles. At Um-sning, elevation 2700 feet, there is a *dák* bungalow in charge of a *chaukidár*. Supplies or coolies are not procurable, but sometimes grain and rice can be purchased. (*d*) Um-sning to Um-jam, 9½ miles. At Um-jam there is a Public Works Department rest-house in charge of a *chaukidár*. Supplies or coolies are not procurable. (*e*) Um-jam to Shillong, 9½ miles, of which 6½ are a continuous ascent. At Shillong there are *dák* bungalows in the Artillery Lines, containing four separate rooms. A *khánsámá* is in attendance, and the rooms are completely furnished with bedding, linen, etc. This entire road, which has a total length of 67 miles, is as perfect a hill road as could be seen in any country, and a model of engineering skill. (2) Road running from Gauháti across the Hills, *viâ* Nongklao, Máo-flang, Cherrá

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at Rs. 480,000, or £48,000, and the revenue derived by Government from the quarries was Rs. 67,266, or £6726. In addition, the Khásí Chiefs receive a revenue from this source of more than £2000.

IRON.—The smelting of iron was once the chief industry in the Khásí Hills, and a considerable quantity of the metal used to be exported into Sylhet, both in the crude and the manufactured state. Recently, however, this industry has almost died out, in the face of the competition of the superior article imported from England and sold in the plains at a cheaper rate. The indigenous methods of extracting, washing, and smelting the ore have been minutely described by Professor Oldham. The following description is taken from Mr. Allen's Report, dated 1858, at which date the annual export of smelted iron was estimated at 45,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 67,500, or £6750, at the rate of Rs. 1. 8 per *maund*:—'The ore is said to be most abundant and of the best quality in the State of Khyrim, especially at the villages of Nongkrím and Noyandrí. A few iron articles, such as *dáos* or hill knives, *koddlis* or mattocks, spear and arrow-heads, are manufactured by the Khásí smiths in the Hills; but the greater bulk of the smelted iron is sent to the plains for sale in circular lumps weighing about 4 or 5 *sers*. These lumps, called *birá*, sell at Chhaták for from Rs. 1. 4 to Rs. 1. 6 per *maund*. The best iron, however, which is beaten into bars called *peli*, sells for from Rs. 1. 10 to Rs. 1. 12 per *maund*. Khásí iron is preferred to English, in consequence of its greater malleability. It is much used by the native boat-builders of Sylhet and the neighbouring Districts to make fastenings for the timbers of their boats. When brought into the market, it is more than half dross, and it is this circumstance which renders the iron trade unprofitable. The cost of carriage from the Hills to the plains is about 6 *dnnás* per *maund*; and the traders, who are all Khásiás themselves, affirm that they get an average profit of only 2 *ánnás* per *maund*.' The tables of trade for 1876-77 return no smelted iron as exported from the Hills, but Rs. 7000 of iron implements exported, against nails and ironmongery imported to the value of Rs. 18,000.

THE MANUFACTURES of the District, besides iron, consist of coarse cotton and *randia* cloth, plain silver work, rude implements of husbandry, netted bags made of the fibre of the pine-apple, common pottery, and mats and baskets. With the exception of the

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with the exception of the
326 manufacture of iron, in which the master blacksmith often employs
462 hired labourers, the other industries are generally followed by
463 females in their own houses. No class of labourers are hereditarily attached to any manufacture in a manner that affects their personal freedom. The system of advancing money for manufacturing pur-
452 poses does not obtain in the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills. The total
434 value of the manufactures of the District is stated to be between £2000 and £3000 per annum. No local manufactures are carried on by means of imported capital.

439 COMMERCE AND TRADE.—The external commerce of the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills is chiefly conducted on the southern boundary, through the District of Sylhet. The total value is more considerable than might be expected, owing to the fact that these Hills practically possess the monopoly of supplying Bengal with lime, potatoes, and oranges. Other important articles of export are raw cotton, stick-lac, betel-nut and *pán* leaves, and bay leaves or *tezpát*. The exportation of iron, which was once large, has now almost ceased. The chief imports consist of rice, dried fish, cotton cloth, salt, and tobacco. On the whole, it would appear that the course of trade is about equally balanced. Trade statistics of more or less value are in existence. The earliest of such statistics are to be found in the Report of Mr. W. J. Allen, dated 1858. The information there given was based for the most part upon oral statements furnished by numerous native traders to Mr. Hudson, who then filled the office of Principal Assistant-Commissioner. It may be accepted as 'a fair representation of the state of trade in
439 the Hills' at that time. The imports and exports on the Assam
434 side were each estimated at about Rs. 15,000, or £1500. The trade with the markets in the Surmá valley was much larger. The total of the exports was valued at Rs. 700,000, or £70,000, giving a profit to the traders of Rs. 170,705, or £17,070. The chief items were:—Limestone, 1,700,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 306,000; potatoes, 50,000 *maunds*, value Rs. 125,000; oranges, 45,000,000 in number, value Rs. 78,750; smelted iron, 45,000 *maunds*, value Rs. 67,500; cotton, 12,000 *maunds*, value Rs. 42,000; betel-nuts, value Rs. 37,500; coal, 25,000 *maunds*, value Rs. 12,500. The total value of the imports was estimated at Rs. 350,000, or £35,000, being just one-half the value of the exports; the estimated profits are given as Rs. 44,325, or £4432. The chief items were:—Rice, 150,000 *maunds*, value Rs. 225,000; cloth of sorts, Rs. 25,000;

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fish, fresh and dried, Rs. 20,000; salt, 2000 *maunds*, value Rs. 10,000. For the last three years, from 1874-75 to 1876-77, elaborate tables of the external commerce have been drawn up by the successive Deputy-Commissioners in charge of the District. There is, however, no organized system of trade registration, and the Chief Commissioner of Assam has expressed the opinion that the figures 'cannot be at all relied upon.' The items vary greatly year by year, which is partly due to the different principles of valuation adopted. For the year 1874-75 the total exports were valued at Rs. 1,371,830, or £137,183, being just double the estimated value twenty years ago; the imports were valued at Rs. 1,359,300, or £135,930, being an increase in the same period of nearly forty-fold. The excess value of exports was Rs. 12,530, or £1253. In 1875-76 the exports were valued at Rs. 1,721,761, or £172,176; the imports at Rs. 1,617,455, or £161,745, showing an excess on the export side of Rs. 104,306, or £10,430. The tables for 1876-77, given in full on the following pages (pp. 238, 239), are quoted from the Administration Report for that year. They are based partly upon returns of trade at the marts of Bholáganj and Jáintiápur, and partly upon such approximations as could be supplied by local traders. The total value of the exports amounts to Rs. 1,603,530, or £160,353; that of the imports to Rs. 1,576,483, or £157,648, showing a balance of Rs. 27,047, or £2704, in favour of the District.

The export of limestone in 1876-77 was 1,600,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 480,000, at the rate of Rs. 300 for 1000 *maunds*. These figures show no increase in quantity, but a large increase in value, over the estimates of twenty years ago. The registration system of river traffic in Bengal shows a total export during 1876-77 from the two Districts of Sylhet and Cáchár of 1,056,159 *maunds* of lime and limestone, valued at Rs. 742,118 at the rate of 12 *dnnds* per *maund*. The difference between these two sets of figures for the same year is very considerable. It may be partly explained by the consideration that the Bengal estimate of value includes the stone after it has been calcined and reduced to lime. The trade in limestone is chiefly in the hands of Messrs. Inglis & Co., whose depot is at Chhaták, on the Surmá river. The connection of this firm with the trade of the Khási Hills is of very long standing. The founder, Mr. Henry Inglis, was the son-in-law of

[*Sentence continued on page* 238.

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ESTIMATE OF IMPORTS INTO THE KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS FOR THE YEAR 1876-77.

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434

ARTICLES.	RATES OF VALUATION.	WEIGHT IN *maunds*.	VALUE.
	Rs. per *maund*.		Rs.
Brass pots and pans,	...	...	14,700
Country soap,	15. 0	1,200	18,000
Churd or crushed rice,	4. 8	650	2,925
Cloth of sorts,	...	...	158,000
Coral beads,	...	...	18,100
Cows and oxen,	...	...	5,600
Castor oil,	16. 0	125	2,000
Cocoa-nut oil,	25. 0	30	750
Dál or pulse,	6. 0	1,600	9,600
Eggs,	...	...	2,000
Earthenware and glass,	...	...	800
European stores,	...	...	16,600
Fish, and dry fish,	6. 0	35,900	215,400
Ghí,	35. 0	650	22,750
Grains,	4. 0	1,300	5,200
Gold,	...	...	6,500
Kerosene oil,	22. 0	125	2,750
Molasses,	7. 0	2,800	19,600
Nails and ironmongery,	20. 0	900	18,000
Oil,	18. 0	1,700	30,600
Onions,	6. 0	800	4,800
Poultry,	...	...	12,500
Rice,	3. 8	205,800	720,300
Salt,	7. 0	12,000	84,000
Sugar,	17. 8	800	14,000
Spices,	...	...	1,000
Silver,	...	...	4,200
Sheep,	...	...	2,400
Tamarind,	8. 0	26	208
Tea and coffee,	...	...	2,300
Tobacco,	13. 0	4,800	62,400
Atta or wheat flour,	7. 0	10,000	70,000
Wines and liquors,	...	...	26,000
Miscellaneous Native goods,	...	...	2,500
Total,	...	...	1,576,483

Sentence continued from page 237.]

439
648 Colonel Lister, who filled the office of Political Agent from 1835 to 1854. In 1858, when Mr. Allen drew up his Report on the District, the trade both in lime and oranges was a monopoly of this Mr. Inglis. The stone is exported to Chhaták and other marts on the Surmá river, where some portion is burned and made into lime, and the remainder sold in the rough. The trade name in Bengal is 'Sylhet lime.'

439
434 The export of potatoes in 1876-77 was 200,500 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 501,250, or £50,125, at the rate of Rs. 2. 8 per *maund*.

[*Text continued on page* 239.

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ESTIMATE OF EXPORTS FROM THE KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS FOR THE YEAR 1876-77.

ARTICLES.	RATES OF VALUATION.	WEIGHT OR NUMBER.	VALUE.
	Rs.		Rs.
Tezpát or bay leaves,	2. 8 per *maund.*	26,000 *maunds.*	65,000
Betel-nuts and *pán* leaves,	...	...	95,600
Black pepper,	1. 8 per *maund.*	500 ,,	9,000
Boats,	...	...	7,000
Cinnamon,	4. 0 per *maund.*	900 ,,	3,600
Chillies,	8. 0 ,,	2,600 ,,	20,800
Cotton,	6. 0 ,,	36,000 ,,	216,000
Fruits (jack and lime),	...	...	2,600
Garlic,	...	...	3,100
Hides,	...	...	1,200
Honey,	15. 0 per *maund.*	330 ,,	4,950
India-rubber,	40. 0 ,,	200 ,,	8,000
Iron implements,	...	...	7,000
Limestone,	300. 0 per 1000 *maunds.*	1,600,000 ,,	480,000
Oranges,	12. 0 per 3000.	9,400,000 No.	37,600
Potatoes,	2. 8 per *maund.*	200,500 *maunds.*	501,250
Pine-apples,	...	...	8,000
Stick lac,	20. 0 per *maund.*	5,000 ,,	100,000
Timber, bamboos, and canes,	...	...	30,000
Turmeric,	2. 0 per *maund.*	700 ,,	1,400
Bees-wax,	55. 0 ,,	26 ,,	1,430
Total,	...	...	1,603,530

Text continued from page 238.]

This price is about the same as it was twenty years ago, but the quantity has increased fourfold. The potato was first introduced into the Hills in 1830 by Mr. David Scott, who was then the Governor-General's Agent. 'No greater boon could have been conferred upon the people.' The local trade is entirely in the hands of the Khásiás themselves, and the larger portion of the produce is despatched direct to Calcutta. According to the registration returns of river traffic in Bengal, the export of provisions (including vegetables) from Sylhet in 1876-77 was 123,108 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 369,324, or £36,932, at the rate of Rs. 3 per *maund*.

The export of oranges in 1876-77 was 9,400,000 in number, valued at Rs. 37,600, at the rate of Rs. 12 per 3000. These figures apparently show a great decrease since 1858. At that time Mr. Inglis possessed the entire monopoly of the trade, by means of the leases which he held from the Khásí Chiefs of all the valuable groves. The annual produce of his groves was estimated at forty-five millions of oranges, having increased from eleven millions within the

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439 previous twenty years. The oranges, like the lime, were brought down to Mr. Inglis' depot at Chhaták, where they were sold to 648 the dealers at the rate of about Rs. 1. 12 per 1000, or less than 245 half their present estimated price. It is stated in Mr. Allen's 434 Report, that the Calcutta market was then chiefly supplied from the groves of Shella Púnjí and Bor Púnjí; the produce of the other villages was more perishable, and required to be sold in the neighbouring Districts. The fruit is known in Calcutta as 'Sylhet oranges.' The Bengal registration returns for 1876-77 show a total export from Sylhet of 64,505 *maunds* of 'fruit,' valued at Rs. 193,515, or £19,351.

439 The export of raw cotton appears to have greatly increased. In 1876-77 the total quantity exported was 36,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 216,000, or £21,600, at the rate of Rs. 6 per *maund*. Twenty years before the export had been only 12,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 42,000, at the rate of only Rs. 3. 8 per *maund*. The cotton is of inferior quality, with a short and woolly staple. It is chiefly consumed by the Sylhet weavers. The total registered export from that District in 1876-77 was only 4300 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 64,500, 434 at the high rate of Rs. 15 per *maund*.

439 The chief article of import now, as twenty years ago, is rice; for [178 the hill-men have never grown sufficient for their own consumption, 243] and the recent establishment of the Civil Station of Shillong has increased the demand. In 1876-77 the total imports of rice were estimated at 205,800 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 720,300, or £72,030, at the rate of Rs. 3. 8 per *maund*. Twenty years ago the imports were nearly as great, viz. 150,000 *maunds;* but the value was only Rs. 225,000, at the rate of Rs. 1. 8 per *maund*, or less than one-half the present value. The chief source of supply is Sylhet District, which sends its surplus to the tea gardens of Cáchár, as well as to these Hills, and also exported, in the year 1876-77, 214,000 *maunds* of rice and 433,100 *maunds* of paddy into Bengal.

The importation of fish (fresh and dried) has enormously increased. In 1876-77 the total amount was 35,900 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 215,400, or £21,540, at the rate of Rs. 6 per *maund*. Twenty years ago the value was only Rs. 20,000, but the quantity is not given. The preparation of dried fish is a flourishing industry in the adjoining District of Sylhet.

The importation of cotton cloth has increased in an almost equal proportion. The value in 1876-77 was Rs. 158,000, or £15,800, as

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against Rs. 25,000, or £2,500, twenty years earlier. The supply of piece-goods is derived directly from Dacca.

A curious feature in the trade of the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills is the total absence of Márwárí or Jain merchants—an enterprising class, who are found everywhere else in Assam, even to the farthest corners of the Brahmaputra valley. There are a few Bengálí traders from Dacca, who do not take up a permanent residence in the Hills; but the great bulk of the business remains in the hands of the natives, who themselves reap the profits and are said to be keen at a bargain.

The principal markets at the foot of the Hills, on the Sylhet side, are Bholáganj, Chhaták, Lakhát, Jaintiápur, Jafling, Pharálbázár, Máodong, Ponatit, Sónápur, Molághul, and Lengjut. Many of these are situated within the Sylhet boundary; but they are all frequented by Khásí and Synteng traders, who spend their whole time in passing from one market village to another. The markets or *hats* are held at regular intervals of eight days (for the Khásí week consists of this number), with the object of permitting the same people to visit the different places in rotation.

CAPITAL.—Such little capital as the people possess is either employed in trade or lent out upon interest. In a few cases it is hoarded and allowed to remain idle. In small loan transactions, whether articles are pledged as security or not, the interest usually charged is one *dnná* in the rupee per month, or 75 per cent. per annum. In larger transactions the rate of interest per month varies from 2 to 3 per cent. Nothing is charged in the name of interest where lands are mortgaged as security for a loan, as the land is always made over to the mortgagee in lieu thereof, and he is only bound to restore it on payment of the amount lent. In petty advances for agricultural purposes, part of the produce is given by the cultivator at something less than market rates in repayment of the amount borrowed. Limestone quarrying is the only industry in the District carried on by European agency.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.—The revenue realized from the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills has increased considerably in recent years. As the Khásí States are treated as semi-independent, the receipts from that portion of the District are altogether insignificant, with the exception of the dues levied from the lime quarries. The larger part of the revenue in Jáintiá is derived from the house tax. For 1835, when British authority was first established in the Khásí Hills,